

Message Text

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S/S - MR. GAMMON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 191755

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, MILI

SUBJ: LATIN AMERICAN VISIT OF F-5E AIRCRAFT

REF: SANTIAGO 4591

FOR AMBASSADOR DAVIS

1. WASHINGTON REPRESENTATIVE OF NORTHRUP CONTACTED DEPARTMENT LAST EVENING (TUESDAY) AND SAID THAT NORTHRUP PRESIDENT THOMAS JONES WANTED TO SPEAK BY TELEPHONE WITH ACTING SECRETARY OR OTHER APPROPRIATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL FIRST THING THIS MORNING (SEPT. 26). JONES WANTED TO DISCUSS SITUATION IN CHILE AND WHETHER OR NOT F-5E SHOULD MAKE STOP THERE.

2. FOLLOWING DEPARTMENTAL CONSIDERATION, IT WAS DECIDED THAT ASSISTANT SECRETARY KUBISCH WOULD TELEPHONE JONES, WHO IS IN CALIFORNIA, AND INFORM HIM THAT DEPARTMENT WOULD NEITHER ADVOCATE NOR OPPOSE SUCH A F-5E VISIT TO CHILE AT THIS TIME. DEPARTMENT FELT THAT THIS SHOULD BE BETWEEN GOC AND NORTHRUP AND THAT NORTHRUP SHOULD MAKE ITS DECISION WITHOUT BEING INFLUENCED ONE WAY OR THE OTHER BY THE USG. CONFIDENTIAL

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FYI. DEPARTMENT BELIEVED THAT OFFICIAL USG OPPOSITION TO F-5E VISIT IN CHILE WOULD HAVE CLEARLY NEGATIVE IMPACT ON FACH AND NEW GOC. ON OTHER HAND, OFFICIAL USG ENDORSEMENT OR ENCOURAGEMENT OF VISIT WOULD HAVE EQUALLY, AND PERHAPS

GREATER, NEGATIVE IMPACT WITHIN US. END FYI.

3. JONES WAS ALSO INFORMED IN THIS MORNING'S TELECON THAT IF NORTHROP DECIDED TO GO AHEAD WITH F-5E VISIT TO CHILE, IT SHOULD CONSIDER MAKING A LOW-KEY PRESS RELEASE INDICATING THIS WAS BUT ONE OF LONG-SCHEDULED SERIES OF STOPS IN SOUTH AMERICA. JONES SAID HE UNDERSTOOD USG POSITION, WOULD CONSULT WITH MANAGEMENT OF NORTHROP, AND BE IN TOUCH WITH US AGAIN LATER TODAY.

4. JONES HAS JUST TELEPHONED KUBISCH (MID-AFTERNOON, SEPT. 26) TO SAY THAT NORTHROP HAS DECIDED NOT REPEAT NOT TO SEND F-5E INTO CHILE "AT THIS TIME." HE SAID A TELEGRAM WOULD BE SENT TODAY TO NORTHROP REPRESENTATIVE IN SANTIAGO INFORMING HIM OF THIS DECISION AND GIVING HIM GUIDANCE. TELEGRAM WILL MAKE CLEAR THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND USG HAD RAISED "NO OBJECTION" TO VISIT AND THAT DECISION WAS LEFT ENTIRELY UP TO NORTHROP. JONES SAYS HE WILL LEAVE OPEN THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE F-5E COULD BE RESCHEDULED TO VISIT CHILE AT SOME LATER DATE AND THAT IN ANY CASE NORTHROP CONTINUES TO WANT TO SELL THE AIRCRAFT TO CHILE.

5. FYI. JONES SAID THAT NORTHROP MANAGEMENT HAD MADE FIRM DECISION NOT TO GO TO CHILE BECAUSE OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS THERE AND THE ANTICIPATED "QUITE VIOLENT" REACTION IN THE US PRESS AND CONGRESS IF THE COMPANY WERE TO ALLOW THE VISIT AT THIS TIME. HE SAID THAT MATTER WAS "MUCH TOO SENSITIVE" AND "COULD BE MISUNDERSTOOD." HE INDICATED THAT NORTHROP HAD A LARGE STAKE -- PERHAPS THE SALE OF AS MANY AS 500 AIRCRAFT TO VARIOUS COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD -- THAT COULD BE UNFAVORABLY AFFECTED BY SENDING THE AIRCRAFT TO CHILE NOW, AT A TIME WHEN THERE IS SUCH LIVELY US PRESS ATTENTION TO DEVELOPMENTS IN CHILE AND WHILE IMPORTANT LEGISLATION AFFECTING POTENTIAL NORTHROP AIRCRAFT SALES IS BEING CONSIDERED BY CONFIDENTIAL

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THE US CONGRESS. JONES DID NOT EXCLUDE POSSIBILITY THAT F-5E COULD BE RETURNED TO CHILE AT SOME POINT, ALTHOUGH HE INDICATED THIS MIGHT COST NORTHROP IN EXCESS OF \$150,000 WHICH WOULD OFFSET ANY PROFIT THE COMPANY COULD HOPE TO MAKE ON ANY SALES TO CHILE. END FYI. RUSH

CONFIDENTIAL

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